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## County to Participate in Alert System to Assist Law Enforcement Officers in Event of Disaster

LAKE COUNTY, IL – The Lake County Board endorsed an intergovernmental agreement today authorizing the Lake County Sheriff's Office to participate in a new statewide alert system. The agreement is among the first of its kind in the nation, providing aid and assistance across jurisdictional lines in case of disaster.

Participating agencies recognize that natural or man-made disasters may result in emergencies that exceed the resources, equipment and personnel of an individual law enforcement agency, and this agreement formally provides for agencies to provide mutual aid to one another as circumstances dictate.

“The intent of the agreement is to safeguard lives and property during an emergency by enabling law enforcement agencies to share resources as needed,” said Lake County Board Member Audrey Nixon, Chair of the Law and Judicial Committee. “Our business is to protect the citizens of Lake County and this agreement helps do that.”

According to Sheriff Gary Del Re, the agreement establishes eight response regions in Illinois and places Lake County in a region with Cook and DuPage Counties.

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## Alert System to Assist Law Enforcement Officers in Event of Disaster – 2 of 2

A state governing board comprised of a Sheriff and Chief from the eight designated regions, the Superintendent of Chicago Police, Illinois State Chief of Police, President of the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police and the President of the Illinois Sheriff's Association will manage the statewide agreement. The same governing board will also distribute future Federal and state homeland security resources to local entities.

The law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction over the site of an emergency assumes full responsibility and command for operations at the scene. An aiding agency may refuse or recall assistance whenever it believes that adequate protection of its jurisdiction or personnel is at risk.

Mutual aid services performed under terms of the agreement shall be performed without reimbursement. Each participating agency also assumes responsibility for its own personnel and equipment when responding to an emergency.

The agreement defines an emergency as a natural or man-made situation that threatens or causes loss of life and property and exceeds the physical or organizational capabilities of a unit of local, state or federal government.

“We’ve been working diligently since September 11<sup>th</sup> to assure that law enforcement agencies have the resources they need to respond to a disaster,” said Lake County Undersheriff Gary Stryker. “Local agencies must subsequently deal with budget shortfalls, so sharing resources across jurisdictions provides a fiscally responsible way to protect citizens.”

Disasters may include fire, flood, earthquake, wind, storm, hazardous materials spill or other water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, air contamination, critical shortages of essential fuels and energy, explosion, riot, hostile military or paramilitary action or acts of domestic terrorism.